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DEPT FOR SRAP, SCA/FO, SCA/RA, AND SCA/A
DEPT PASS FOR AID/ANE
DEPT PASS USTR FOR DELANEY AND DEANGELIS
DEPT PASS OPIC
DEPT PASS FOR TDA FOR STEIN AND GREENIP
USOECD FOR ENERGY ATTACHE
CENTCOM FOR CSTC-A
NSC FOR JWOOD
TREASURY FOR JCASAL, ABAUKOL, AWELLER, AND MNUGENT
COMMERCE FOR HAMROCK-MANN, DEES, AND FONOVICH

SENSITIVE

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SUBJECT: Ambassador's Meeting with Japanese SRAP Yoshikawa

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY. Japan's Special Envoy for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Ambassador Motohide Yoshikawa, told the Ambassador July 22 that he had stressed to President Karzai that the Afghan elections must be credible, secure, and free - only on that basis would Japan continue to support Afghanistan. The Ambassador thanked Japan for its generous assistance to Afghanistan and shared preliminary U.S. ideas on a post-election understandings between Afghanistan and the international community, covering sovereignty, reconciliation, accountable governance, development, and regional issues. Yoshikawa agreed with this conceptual framework and said Japan hopes to continue providing financial assistance for Afghan police salaries but is unlikely to deploy police trainers. However, he said Japan's interest in Afghanistan may be waning and it is getting harder to make the case for continued high aid levels. End Summary

¶2. (SBU) Yoshikawa said he was focusing on elections during this, his first trip to Afghanistan. He had met with President Karzai, as well as candidates Ghani and Abdullah, and stressed to Karzai that the elections must be credible, secure, and free - only on that basis would Japan continue to support Afghanistan. Karzai, he noted, sounded confident, and said his priorities were peace, for which he needed Pakistani help to take on the Afghan Taliban in Pakistan, and reconciliation, where he was seeking Saudi help to bring the Taliban back into society. Yoshikawa said Karzai has successfully charmed the Japanese people, but his support among Japanese government leaders may be waning. Japan is concerned that the campaign has lacked a debate on policy visions; Karzai appeared to think the election result is already decided. Japan has been a steady supporter of Afghanistan but its interest is declining and is "artificially inflated" by the fact that Af-Pak is the number-one U.S. foreign policy priority.

¶3. (SBU) The Ambassador thanked Japan for its generous assistance to Afghanistan and its vital political and diplomatic role - a great example as we urge other donors to do more here. He noted that the Disarmament of Illegally Armed Groups (DIAG) process has been frustrating but that the international community (IC) and the GIROA have an opportunity ahead to find a more coherent approach. He said the USG is neutral in the election and has pressed for a more competitive debate of ideas. We've been successful among opposition candidates but less so with Karzai, whose platform is more a list of projects than a policy vision.

¶4. (SBU) The Ambassador said that the election provides an

opportunity for the IC to consider how it will partner with the GIROA over the next five years. The U.S. is considering an approach which would not be bilateral but must have IC agreement. He said any way ahead should cover five areas: 1) return of full Afghan sovereignty, with continued IC assistance, over an agreed timeframe (key issues would be detention operations and Afghan Army and Police development); 2) reconciliation; 3) justice and accountable governance; 4) economic development (with emphasis on reinforcing existing plans and institutions; and 5) Afghanistan's place in the region. The Ambassador said the GIROA in principle will support all the elements of this conceptual framework except number 3, where the U.S. and GIROA have significant differences.

¶5. (SBU) Yoshikawa agreed with this general framework. He said Japan hopes to continue providing financial assistance for Afghan police salaries but is unlikely to deploy police trainers. In response to the Ambassador's question, he said domestic political factors partly explain why the GOJ did not build on its Iraq experience and deploy military forces here. Former Prime Minister Koizumi had the political clout to do this in Iraq, but the next government did not. Yoshikawa said Japan also has stronger economic interests in Iraq than in Afghanistan. He said Japan's challenge on security assistance is to demonstrate to the public what more the GOJ can do even under existing laws on peace and security. Although outsiders who support a change in the laws may see that as a setback, Yoshikawa hoped Japan could do more without changing laws. But he cautioned that a political change after Japan's August 30 election could make even that harder.

¶6. (SBU) On justice and accountable government, Yoshikawa said the Afghan media somewhat overstated things when it reported after recent bilateral aid consultations that Japan would stop assistance

KABUL 00002138 002 OF 002

if corruption continues. He said the GOJ has been hesitant to take such a hard line but it will more closely scrutinize projects. On development, he agreed that we have enough coordinating and delivery mechanisms. On regional integration, he agreed the IC can do more to help Afghanistan feel more secure, to prevent it moving closer to Iran.

¶7. (SBU) In response to the Ambassador's question, Yoshikawa said China's role in Afghanistan has been purely economic and related to China's own narrow interests. Though China's infrastructure investment is welcome, we should urge China to be a more responsible partner here. Finally, Yoshikawa hoped President Obama would visit Japan in the fall and that this would provide an opportunity to concentrate on the foreign policy agenda, including Af-Pak issues.

EIKENBERRY